TRANSCRIPT—JAN SCHOCHET

Interviewee: Jan Schochet

Interviewer: Sharon Fahrer

Interview Date: April 23, 2017

Location: Fairway Road, Asheville, N.C. (Home of Jan Schochet)

Length: 1 digital recording; 01:12:02

Transcriber: Alice Helms (edited by Jan Schochet)

Transcription Date: May 7, 2017 (Notes in parentheses are corrections made by Jan Schochet June 23; notes in brackets were added July 13.)

Sharon Fahrer: This is Sharon Fahrer and I'm speaking with Jan Schochet on April 23, 2017 in her home on Fairway Road, and we're going to talk about Jan's experience living in North Asheville. Let's start with, where were you born?

Jan Schochet: I was born in St. Joseph Hospital in Asheville, North Carolina.

SF: What were your parents' names and where were they born?

JS: My mother was Mary Petersiel Schochet and she was born in Richmond, Virginia and my dad was Sidney Schochet and he was born in Asheville. He was born at home in a house on Spruce Street that was two houses north of Thomas Wolfe's mother's boarding house.

SF: What type of work did your parents do?

JS: My parents had a store. When they first came back to Asheville after the war in 1944, that was a shoe store and in the seventies they opened a second store that was just the dancewear that they had sold since the 1940s. And that store originally was at 9 Patton Avenue, where the drive-through for what has been for many years the BB&T Bank building. In 1964 they moved on the corner of Patton and South Lexington, to 16 Patton Avenue. The dancewear store was started in 1978 and it was at 14 Patton Avenue.

SF: What were their names?

JS: The stores? The first store was called The Bootery. It was a shoe store and it merged--with the tearing down of that block and the building of the BB&T Bank building in 1964--it merged with my uncle's store called The Star Store, which was next door at 7 Patton Avenue. They bought a building at 16 Patton on the corner of South Lexington and Patton and they kept separate names with the aisle separating the two stores, so the The Star Store was on the left side of the store and The Bootery was on the right side of the store. But then my uncle died in 1971 and the stores kind of became one, and ultimately became known informally and then formally as the The Star Bootery. The dancewear store that started in 1978 was called A Dancer's Place.

SF: When did you move to North Asheville?

JS: The minute my mother got out of the hospital I moved to North Asheville. [Laughter]. That was in 1953.

SF: And how long did you live there?

JS: Well, we lived at that house, which was on Gracelyn Road, at 30 Gracelyn Road, from 1953 to 1957. In 1957 my parents bought a house that had been built as a spec house on Country Club Road, 189 Country Club Road. I went to college when I was eighteen and lived there in the summers and even after college I kind of lived there on and off, in between apartments in other parts of North Asheville I guess, until we sold the house after my father died in 2005, on Country Club Road.

SF: What schools did you go to?

JS: I went to preschool at Little Beaver College and Country Club, is what that was called. It was run by Del and—I don't remember Mrs. Blount's first name, but a lot of people who lived in North Asheville went to Little Beaver for both preschool and summer camp.

SF: Where was it?

JS: It was on Tsali Trail, right off of Elk Mountain Scenic Highway. They had five acres, I think. It was a ranch house and for the summer camp they had a pony ring and all kinds of playground equipment and an archery range and a softball field and a swimming pool. Coach Bill Stanley was the swimming coach that taught us all the Red Cross swimming certificates like beginners' and intermediate and junior and life saver and all that kind of stuff, lifeguard. I went to that summer camp through, I guess, the fourth grade maybe. Their school was preschool and kindergarten, because kindergarten was not part of the public schools at that time. They even had first grade but I went to first grade at Grace School, which is the forerunner of Ira B. Jones School. Mr. Jones was our principal at Grace School and we moved, I think in the third grade, to the new school, which was Ira

B. Jones School, which was on the same property. I'm actually not sure what it is, it must be the playground probably, now, where Grace School used to be.

SF: Was it an old building? Grace?

JS: Yes, Grace School was a very old building. It was at least two stories, dark red brick, one of those typical old schools from probably the teens or twenties where you had—it seemed like an infinite number of steps that you climbed up to get to the main level. There was a basement. Now in the basement level there was a lunchroom and a few classrooms, my second grade classroom was down there, and an indoor gymnasium. So I guess it was three stories. A lot of people talk about that. Now other people who went to that school that I have found out—I only knew the people who were going there with me—but I know that, for example, Wilma Dykeman went to Grace School. And I think that at that time it was probably first through twelfth grade, but when I was there it was an elementary school. Now when Jones School started, I'm not sure about Grace School, but you know how they change the school configurations of grades every few years, when I was at Jones school, it was first grade through seventh grade, so I went first grade through seventh grade to Jones School. Then everyone would go to junior high school for two years, then high school.

SF: So then where did you go to school?

JS: I went to St. Genevieve's starting in the eighth grade and graduated from St. Genevieve's. I was in the last graduating class of St. Genevieve's-of-the-Pines Academy, which had boarders and day students. I was a day student.

SF: Do you consider yourself still living in North Asheville?

JS: Yes. I live sort of across the street from Beaver Lake and that is very much North Asheville, the core of North Asheville sort of.

SF: Do you know what year your house was built and who the architect might have been?

JS: Well, this house, I'm pretty sure was built in 1950 and I do not know the architect. I'm not sure actually that there was an architect, because not every house had architects back then. When you look at the basement and the underpinnings, I think it was pretty much a family just probably hired someone to build a house, because it's kind of wacky in the basement. I do know who the family that built it happened to be—if you can give me a minute—I just asked someone what the name of that person was. The family that built this house was another Jewish family and they had come down from the northeast, probably New York or Connecticut to work for Ecusta. The father worked for Ecusta in Brevard, along with a lot of other people who came down in that time period and they had other people who worked there. Hang on just a minute and I will check in my emails. [Note from Jan: It was the Leonard Bauer Family.]

SF: And while you're checking, I'll just ask you, do you have any plans for this house? Architectural plans?

JS: No, but I can tell you who else lived in this house that I know of afterwards. I know in the eighties Brian Hunter, who is the accountant, lived in this house and his kids were born while he and his wife—who went to St. Genevieve's too, I knew her—lived here. They really wanted to stay here but they needed a bigger house so they built in another

part of town. A dentist named Dr. Gillespie, Tim Gillespie, he lived here and his wife put in some really beautiful garden beds. And then someone else lived here, and then someone who I bought it from who lived here for only one year. Let's see. Her name is Carol somebody. Hang on, I know I'm going to get this because I just emailed this person not that long ago. [Note from Jan: Referring to Carol Bauer, a daughter of the original owners of the house.]

SF: Do you think this is the original house or do you think people added on to it?

JS: No, they did not add on to it. I'm quite sure that this is the original house. Do you want to know some little—? There aren't a whole lot of characteristics that are built in but there's a couple characteristics that are built in that are kind of cool. The dining room has some built in corner cupboards that are kind pretty and they look pretty classical. There's—what do you call that strip?

SF: Chair rail.

JS: There's chair rail just in the dining room. So it's a little combination of it kind of looks like a bungalow but it's a ranch house really, because it's one level but like many houses in Asheville, it's sort of built on a hill so the basement is partially walk out basement and partially built into the hill. So it's a one-level house but you kind of have to walk upstairs to get into the house. And the other thing that I think is really cool, I can tell that somebody widened the door from the dining room into the living room, the entryway. It's not a door, it's just a wider opening. But every other doorway, including closets, has what I've been told is called a California corner, because it's almost like you

have quarter rail on it that is painted over so they're sort of curved. You can't see it right here but it's sort of like the way that—.

SF: No, I know exactly what you mean.

JS: I really like that.

SF: That's so you don't bump into it and it's sharp.

JS: Yes, I think it's actually really smart. I think it's very fifties though. I think it's really kind of fifties-looking. Anyway, those are the main things. The windows have been changed out and they are vinyl windows from the eighties. So I bet that the windows are probably a little bit different size but they still have—they're sash windows, not crank out windows.

SF: Do you have any old photos of the house or the neighborhood?

JS: No, I don't.

SF: Or your old neighborhood?

JS: Wait, we're talking about this house?

SF: I guess now we are. [Laughter]. So now I'm asking you if when you were living on Gracelyn and Country Club, if you had any old photographs.

JS: Oh, there are. I have them, in Chapel Hill. I have lots of photographs of the Gracelyn Road house and it's still there. It looks exactly the same. It was a brick house that was a one story house but it had gabled—.

SF: What was the address?

JS: 30 Gracelyn Road. It had a gabled roof so it kind of looked like it might have been a two-story house but it was actually a one-story house.

SF: Maybe next time you come you can bring some and we can scan them.

JS: I'm trying to think. I might have a picture in the thing that I made for my mom.

SF: So here's a question. When you were growing up, and your family hired people to work at the house or the yard, were they African American, or were they Caucasian?

JS: The people who worked in the house. Yes. We had a series of African American ladies.

SF: Do you know their names?

JS: Yes, I do. I do not remember who dealt with the yard on Gracelyn Road, but I do remember some of the people who worked on the yard on Country Club Road and for most of the time they were African American. The last person who my parents had was a white guy because I inherited him here at this house and then my dad wanted him to work at their house.

SF: Do you know how they got there? Did they take the bus?

JS: [Note from Jan: For the housekeepers, they took the bus. The yard men had their own car or truck.] Bus. The bus service was so good when I was a little kid. The bus came every thirty minutes and there were two buses from either of those—. Okay, I'll tell you

all about the buses because I rode the buses quite a lot. The city buses. You rode either the Charlotte/Macon bus or the Merrimon/Midland bus. And the Charlotte/Macon bus came—there were two. They used to have these concrete benches that you could sit on. So, the Charlotte/Macon bus, I could catch either at Country Club and Griffing, there was a stop right there on the southwest corner of Country Club and Griffing, right in front of my cousin the Gordons' house. Or there was also a stop at the four-way stop at Gracelyn and Kimberly on again, the southwest corner of that street. The bus, it was on Kimberly. Wait, maybe it was the Charlotte/Kimberly, it wasn't the Charlotte/Macon, that was a different one. Sorry. Not Charlotte/Macon, Charlotte/Kimberly bus is the bus I'm talking about. Or if I missed it, I could walk down Gracelyn to the corner of Gracelyn and Merrimon, and that was the Merrimon/Midland bus and that would be the southeast corner of that—.

SF: It doesn't really matter.

JS: Well it does if people are really trying to get the—.

SF: Did you have any animals or pets, like chickens or—.

JS: [Laughter]. Well.

SF: Or did you grow a garden?

JS: My dad had chickens. I know he told me stories when he was growing up that they always had chickens and that was on College Park Place, which doesn't exist anymore but it was over there behind the First Baptist Church. I don't remember if we had any pets at all on Gracelyn Road, but when we moved to Country Club Road, we had a series of

these poor little tiny turtles with painted backs that you could get at Woolworth's. Wait, there were turtles, those you got at the dime store. Baby chicks you could get—we had those around Easter time, not because we celebrated Easter, which we didn't, but that's when they showed up at places like—oh I don't remember what it's called but everyone from Asheville will remember this store which was a block away from my parents' store. It was a seed and feed store which also had animals in the back, like puppies and kittens and they had chickens at Easter time and that store was on the corner of North Lexington and College Street, on the northwest corner. And a man named Jules owned it and ran it. People will also remember him but I can't remember his last name. We got chickens from there and I don't know, somebody would build a chicken coop, they were in our basement and I don't even know why we—I don't know if my brother or I begged for them or my dad just thought they were a good idea, but then when they started getting big, my dad would put them in a carton, a shoe shipment carton, and he would take them to a man who worked for my uncle named Mr. Penley, who lived out in Candler or Canton or somewhere, kind of more like in a rural area. Mr. Penley would get those and I'm sure that—he was a very, very old man and I'm sure that somebody probably dined on them at some point later. We did get a puppy one time when I was about twelve, from Jules' store, and that poor little puppy cried all night long in the basement because my parents made me keep him in the basement. I did everything in the little book I had about dogs. We put a warm hot water bottle covered with blankets in his little box and we put a ticking clock, that was supposed to imitate the mother dog's heart, but he cried so much that the poor dog went back to Jules the next day and I'm sure he got a much better home than our home. We got another dog, when I was—I was pretty young then, maybe nine.

When I was twelve, one of my mom's friends who bred dogs, showed dogs for a living, showed up at our door at dinnertime one night with this very nervous, shaking, poor little dog who I'm pretty sure was a Jack Russell Terrier. An adult dog who she said that she was at a dog show and the owner wanted to get rid of it or else it was going to be euthanized because the dog wasn't really show material, so she knew that my mom had talked to her about how I had wanted a dog so she thought this would be the perfect dog and it was a really big surprise for us. But we got a dog from my mom's friend.

SF: What were some of the best aspects of living in the neighborhood when you were growing up? What did you enjoy the most about it?

JS: The Gracelyn Road neighborhood was right around the corner from Lord's Drugstore, which is now the toy store and a little bit further down Merrimon Avenue there was a whole row of buildings. That area, which was called Grace, the Grace section of town, was a little mercantile area and I specifically remember there was a restaurant called Grace Restaurant, which is in that little row of shops that sits right up to Merrimon Avenue but it's the first storefront that would be right next to where Walgreen's is, just north of Walgreen's. The family that had that restaurant, the Kalogerakis family I think, George Kalogerakis, I think that's how you say his name. George and his brother and a cousin, three men who came from Greece like the year before, in the early fifties, started that restaurant and then the cousin and the brother went off and started their own restaurants in other parts of Asheville. But that restaurant stayed in operation from the fifties through maybe the middle seventies. My aunt, who lived in Atlanta and was a librarian, was my mom's much younger sister so she was very close in age to my brother

and to me. She was pretty young, so she'd do fun stuff with us. She'd walk me, when I was little, around the corner to Grace Restaurant for lunch and we'd get hamburgers and french fries and coke and that was a really big deal. Or, we'd go to Lord's Drugstore and Lord's Drugstore had of course fountain service but they also had a really big section of comic books and our family had a very big comic book collection, my brother and I did. So I do specifically remember those things. I don't think that we ever actually crossed Merrimon Avenue though. It was not four lanes, I'm sure at that point, but it was kind of busy. An aside about the Grace section, my dad grew up in a house, the house that was on College Park Place, which was right there, like off of Woodfin, where it turns south, kind of--Executive Park is kind of where that whole big hill was, where there was a school and a neighborhood. His older sister used to drive to a hardware store out in Grace to buy my dad a specific brand of ketchup, when he was a little boy and he really liked ketchup on every single thing. And he was sort of a pampered little kid because he was the baby in the family and apparently there were many, many, many brands of ketchup, not just Hunt's and Heinz. If you look up ketchup history, there were millions of brands, but this particular brand was only available at that one store and she used to drive all the way out, which I guess was maybe three or four miles from downtown. This would have been in the twenties, so that was kind of a big deal to go get my dad's ketchup in Grace, in a hardware store in the Grace section of town.

SF: What were some of the negative aspects to the neighborhood?

JS: Wait, there's one more positive one which I forgot, which was—shoot, I don't remember where the library was.

SF: Was it on Larchmont?

JS: Well that got built later, when we lived over on Country Club, so I don't think we went to the library. Well I was only four or five when we moved to Country Club, so the library probably didn't figure in there. That particular neighborhood, I don't really remember any negatives. The people were really nice, we had nice neighbors. I remember there was an older lady who lived—well maybe she didn't live close by. There were some older ladies in the neighborhood who would come and babysit me when I was really little. I don't remember anything negative about it. But I was pretty young. [Laughter]. Now, do you want me to answer all those questions for Country Club for a hoot?

SF: I guess so.

JS: Okay. Now Country Club Road did not have any stores right around there but when I moved there I was five years old and I was the only girl with a pack of kids who lived right around me, who were all related and they were all boys. They were the Warners and the Millers, and I used to run around with them and we would run up—at that time, there were fewer houses sort of around Club Knoll and Club View so there were a lot of woods right around and there was a creek that ran in front of our house so we'd be playing in the creek and catching little salamanders, catching little crawfish. We'd run up to the Grove Park Inn. There was literally the Biltmore Industries, barely—it was there but nobody really knew about it, there certainly wasn't an art gallery or a restaurant there. You couldn't go in there. And where there's a big parking lot for Grovewood Galleries and the restaurant now, there actually was a place, I guess dormitories for the help who worked at

the Grove Park Inn. So we would walk down Grovewood and there were still actually the ruins of what my friend Rick Warner told me, because his grandfather developed that whole area, and they lived there behind us-- He really knew all the history You need to interview him, or I need to interview him or something. He showed me where there were stables for the Grove Park Inn and the ruins of the stables were there. You could see the floor and part of the walls. And, we would just run up and hang around and play in the Grove Park Inn. It was only open part of the year. It wasn't winterized so it wasn't open in the winter, so it was a great playground when nobody was there. I don't really know if we necessarily snuck up there when people were staying there but our playground was literally from the Grove Park Inn, up Grovewood Road, to Sumner Place. Mr. Sumner was Rick's grandfather who developed that whole Grovewood area with his brother-in-law, Mr. Foster. Let's see what was that real estate company called? Sumner—. Oh, I'll think of it. (It was Sumner and Foster Realty.) Anyway, there's a little road called Sumner Place, so from Sumner Place, which people thought was our backyard. Oh yeah, Mr. Sumner's front yard, which people thought was our backyard, was this whole big field, and so all the kids would come and play football or baseball. It was like a park but it really wasn't a public park at all. There was a really good climbing tree on one end of that park, it was some kind of a cherry tree, an ornamental cherry tree, and it was kind of squat and really wide and really old and tall. So that was our climbing tree. That was the stuff that we did at that particular place. But then, they built a new library on Larchmont and my aunt figured out a way to walk up Sedley Place, cross Kimberly, go through another street the name I don't remember and cut through some woods and you would end up right there at the library. It was just really like maybe a five minute walk if that.

So, she was really instrumental in getting me to read a lot of books. I don't know, my brother was probably—he's six years older so he was probably in junior high and he didn't come along on those little adventures but that was a good thing. I spent a lot of time at the library. At that point I don't think I really walked to Lord's or the other places we had been so much anymore. Although I will say that my parents still, every single Saturday night, we ate at Grace Restaurant because my parents worked Monday through Saturday and they were very tired by Saturday night and mom wasn't going to cook so we had dinner at the Grace Restaurant until they closed for good.

SF: What kind of restaurant was it?

JS: It was—.

SF: Greek?

SJ: It was one of the Greek-owned restaurants that only served southern American food. Mostly what we ordered there would be their fried shrimp or roast beef or George made really, really good flounder or some kind of fish. You'd get two vegetables, you'd get a baked potato and something else and a salad would come with it. So it was just a meat and two or three vegetable kind of place. And he had pies. But they really didn't serve any Greek food at all until maybe the last ten or fifteen years. The last ten or fifteen years he did make spanakopita and so you could get spanakopita for one of the vegetables. They made really good spanakopita. His mother-in-law lived with them. George's mother-in-law lived with them. They lived in and still do live in that house behind that building, which faces—their house faces onto Ottari. So the mother-in-law who was an older Greek lady, she made Greek bread. So that was the bread that they served, just

Greek bread. And the salad you got was a Greek salad, or you could have a plain one but those were the only Greek things they served. Oh wait, they did have baklava.

SF: So are there any negative aspects that you can think of?

JS: Of being on Country Club Road? No, actually one really good thing I forgot was the Grove Park Inn on the Fourth of July always had fireworks and Mr. Sumner had planted this row of hemlock trees behind our house, we had a very shallow, not very much of a backyard and then those hemlocks started. But they weren't very tall, they were probably about four feet tall. So now they're very, very tall but most of the time I was growing up, we would lie on lounge chairs in our backyard and you could just see the fireworks every Fourth of July just going straight up. They were like this show that was right there for you. By the time we sold the house (in 2006), or even in the early 1990s, you couldn't see them anymore because there were some developments in between and the hemlock trees had grown high. Sometimes from this house (current house), because it sits up on a hill I can kind of see fireworks.

SF: The house on Fairway.

JS: Yes, the house on Fairway, I can kind of see fireworks.

SF: So, how would you say the neighborhood has changed over the years, and why? What brought the changes?

JS: Well, the change on Gracelyn I don't think has been—the only thing that I see really very much that's changed is that a lot traffic calming things have happened on that street, which makes it hard to drive on.

SF: On Gracelyn?

SJ: On Gracelyn. A lot of traffic calming has been put in on those streets so I used to drive to my parents house on Country Club to go see them on Gracelyn and I'd always look over at our little old house, the little house we used to live in, but there's so many speed bumps and then they made these concrete things that stick out into the road that—.

SF: The traffic islands.

JS: Traffic islands, right, and so the purpose of that is so people won't use it as cut through road, which I was using it as, so I never drive on that street anymore. I guess the people who live on that street now probably like it, because I'm sure people drove really fast. Also, literally our house was right across the street from the parking lot of the church that's right there, and so that church, I notice when I'm driving on Merrimon, they have a really huge garden area that they grow and I've been told I think that it's for people who don't have enough food, it's for helping the community. So that's a change because it used to be just a big grass yard and I think that's really, really good. We did used to have Girl Scouts and Brownie Scouts in the basement of that church. Peggy Gardner's mom was our Brownie Scout leader. On Country Club Road, in that neighborhood, some of the houses have been, not a lot of them, but the house directly next to our house, was a tear-down and somebody built this giant house that doesn't really fit the neighborhood at all. I don't remember at what point, but at some point, the traffic from the Grove Park Inn became much, much, much, more intense on Country Club Road. Oh, I know what it was, The Asheville Country Club used to be on Country Club Road, that's why the road is called Country Club Road. At some point after the Asheville Country Club moved over

here off of Wembley Road, or on Wembley Road, in the seventies, I think that happened in 1977, the Grove Park Inn bought the building that was the Asheville Country Club and for a while it was called the Grove Park Inn Country Club and I think that must be when the traffic really increased. You can go on Grovewood, from the back part of the Grove Park Inn, and go around Grovewood onto Country Club and then go into the front of that Country Club area. So the traffic got really, really bad and I know that the neighbor's dog, a really big dog, sheepdog actually, got hit and killed on Country Club, which used to never happen. It was very sort of neighborhoody. But around the early nineties, this is a thing that had never happened before, around the early nineties the wild turkeys started coming and that was a whole brand new thing and then by the time we sold my parents' house in 2005 (correction: 2006), there were bears there every day and there were never bears before 2000. And when I was growing up there certainly weren't any bears or wild turkeys or anything. We were the wild kids but there were no wild animals in that neighborhood. I'm not sure if the bears have come over to Gracelyn Road, there are bears over here sometimes on Fairway Road.

SF: So, do you see any threats to the neighborhood, that could endanger its historic qualities or take away from its character? Any environmental concerns? Noise or lights?

JS: For Gracelyn Road, I think that a man who has lived there, not when we lived there, but he's lived there for more than thirty years, he and his wife, and they raised their kids there and I'm not sure what address he lives at, Mike Lewis. He's pointed out at different meetings that that whole neighborhood, which is Melrose, and Woodlawn and some other roads the names I can't really remember, but out-of-town people are coming and buying

properties and turning them into Airbnbs, or they're buying properties, tearing down the house and building fourplexes for Airbnbs, and that's really changing that neighborhood for the worse for them because some of the people that stay in Airbnbs are there to have a wild time so that's really changed that residential neighborhood. I don't think that happens very much at all at Country Club Road. I guess what I would say about Country Club Road is the—I had thought of something but now I don't remember what that was. I will say that over here in Lakeview Park, there is a big concern about a piece of property that's on the backside of Reynold's Mountain, Reynold's Mountain development. The north side of Reynold's Mountain is in Woodfin but the backside of it is kind of part of Lakeview Park. It's a lot of acres and somebody about a year and a half ago, was going to put a huge number, like two hundred houses up there and the main entry way was going to be driving in to Lakeview Park. I think it's off of Beaver Brook or some of those roads that are higher up and further up in Lakeview Park. A group of people got together and were able to stop that but they're still very concerned about whether or not somebody else might come along and try to do another project that would impede traffic. I think what stopped it actually was that the group had hired a lawyer and made it very, very well known that the roads that were going to the incoming roads to the development were not going to support the number of people, the number of cars that were coming in through here. And Lakeview Park is a historic neighborhood because it was designed by Nolan in the 1920s. And there are plans for the neighborhood back then and Beaver Lake is very historic. There used to be a swimming area on the south side, the southwest side of it and a beach, up until the polio epidemic of the 1940s which was before I was born. I don't think it's a national historic district but it is a historic neighborhood in town so we really

don't want to have, like, what's happened in some neighborhoods to impact the peace and quiet of here. Barring making Merrimon Avenue from the bird sanctuary north four lanes, which hasn't come up yet, I think that would be a big disruption to the neighborhood but nobody thankfully has tried to do that yet.

SF: So you did mention some of your neighbors and you said that they were friendly. Did you know most of your neighbors?

JS: Yes. When I was little I played on Gracelyn Road with kids but I don't actually remember who they were. As I said, I moved away when I was five. On Country Club Road, I was really good friends with Bert King the architect's sons and I was in his house like a million times. Not a million, but many, many times. They lived on the corner of Sedley Place and Country Club Road and so they were across the street and over one house. The house directly next to us on the same side of Country Club was owned by Dr. Samuel Robinson and his wife Esther Robinson. They were very, very old when I was a kid. I didn't go and visit them, but my parents certainly knew them and we went to Temple Beth HaTephila, which is where they went as well. On Country Club, the people behind us were the Sumners and the Sumners were also sort of our grandparents' age, so their kids who were our parents' age, they lived in houses on either side of the Sumner's house and they had little kids my age and so we all hung out. The Millers lived back there and Mr. Miller was an accountant and I played with his kids. His son Thom Miller and his family own Urban Orchard, a cidery in West Asheville now. I've been in communication with him. So some of the people have come back, like one of the Warners, daughter Becky, came back. The field doesn't exist because now there's two

houses in the field. Becky Warner and Rick Warner built houses in that field. So it's about half the size that it was. I'm not sure that neighborhood kids play games there anymore. If you cut through the field and went up to Grovewood, one of my really good friends from Sunday School, and my parents' friends, her parents were friends of my parents, Laine Barton lived back on Maplewood. The Rosens lived on Grovewood. Julie Adams was a really good friend of mine, her dad was an insurance man, agent. She lived in the first house on Maplewood. I kind of knew people because I played with their kids, but my dad, my parents would know people. My mom played duplicate bridge so she might have known—I know some of the people she knew lived around there and dad knew people from the city and the community who were in our neighborhood. Also on our street, across the street and over a couple houses was—I do not remember the man's name, but he worked for the Citizen-Times, I think he was the associate editor, something like that. Another man whose name I can't remember was a magistrate (Coleman Ramsey I think), a city magistrate, so my dad knew him. We knew a lot of the people because the city of Asheville was not very big, there might have been fifty thousand people but you kind of knew the families of who you went to school with or who your siblings went to school with.

SF: Did you feel like there was a strong sense of community?

JS: Oh yeah. You mean neighborhood community or just Asheville community?

SF: I think neighborhood community.

JS: Here's what I'll say about that. People that I knew who lived in North Asheville, or let me say most of the people I knew lived in North Asheville. I would say ninety per

cent of the people I knew lived in North Asheville. I hardly knew anyone who lived in South Asheville or East Asheville or West Asheville. I was going to say that my friends didn't either but that's not really true because a lot of people who were my friends, who weren't Jewish—I've only been here four generations but they've been here for like eight generations and they often had cousins who would live in West Asheville, specifically West Asheville. Some of them had cousins who had farms, that was more in West Asheville, going towards Candler or Leicester. Now as an adult, I know that some of the people that I grew up with would go to their farms and hang out with them but I wasn't particularly aware of that. I think I wasn't aware that much of other sides of town, so that's kind of an interesting revelation.

SF: Were there any people of different ethnic or racial backgrounds that lived in the neighborhood?

JS: Let's see. We were Jewish so that was different from people who weren't. There were no black people, African-American people, who lived in those neighborhoods. And there may have been some Greek, there probably were some Greek families. There were Greek families who lived around the Gracelyn neighborhood but not around Country Club to my knowledge. So, no. I think that they were mostly Caucasian, European kind of people.

SF: Are there any legends about the neighborhood? Car found in the bottom of Beaver Lake, ghosts, or something?

JS: Well, let's see. I wouldn't know that about Gracelyn Road. On Country Club, again, Rick Warner, he used to tell me these stories when we were like six and seven years old. I'm sure he heard them from his uncles or his grandfather or something. He would say,

like, we were up at his house which was behind our house and to the side, and we'd be looking at the big field and he's say, 'See that tree over there? When the sun starts to set—.' I cannot remember, Mr. Somebody who was some kind of a being, he had a wacky name and he wasn't a person, he was kind of a big elf or something. He comes out at night. But I never was scared of it. He protected the neighborhood or something. No, when I was a kid I never really heard of any of that kind of thing and I'm not even sure that I know about anything here in this neighborhood. Although I will say that Chandler Warner, who would be Rick Warner's uncle, he told me a story about ten years ago about—and this is a little bit of a legend. I told him what street I lived on, on Fairway, and he said, 'Ah. Fairway Road. That's got a cul-de-sac at the end, right?' Because this street does have a cul-de-sac at the end, it was built in the twenties and probably was one of the first cul-de-sac streets in existence. But he said, 'We used to, in high school, we'd drive our girlfriends down there and we'd park and we called that kiss-and-don't-tell.' So that little area down at the end of the cul-de-sac, the teenagers from North Asheville back then used to go to kiss-and-don't-tell. Now, there was a legend but it I learned this, maybe in junior high school. It's about if you go way, way up Elk Mountain Scenic Highway where it really starts to go up the mountain. Maybe it was Eagle? What's it called? Eagle Rock? [Buzzard's Rock] There's a place that was a place that teenagers used to go up to when I was probably in junior high but the older kids used to go up there. It must have been after I went to St. Genevieve's because apparently the nuns told the girls the story which is, this is a meme that exists everywhere. So-and-so was in a car with a boy there and they were making out and then when they got back home there was a hook hand on their door handle. [Laughter]. There had been some monstrous person

with a hook hand who was trying to get into the car while they were making out so don't ever go up there because you might get killed by the hook hand. I'm not telling it very well. I'm sure somebody that you interview, if you had a bunch of us together, people would know more of that tale.

SF: Was there any kind of a neighborhood association there for any of those places?

JS: I don't think there was at that time on Gracelyn, although I'm sure now there is. Country Club, no.

SF: But now here there is.

JS: Here there is. Yeah. The Lakeview Park Association has been around, I don't know how many years. I don't know when it started but it's been around.

SF: Do they have get-togethers or celebrations or—?

JS: There's an annual meeting in October every year, and usually in the summertime, my part of Lakeview Park which is sort of Windsor and Wembley and Fairway and probably some other streets a little bit further up, they close off one of the roads up there, I think Windsor, and have a street picnic or something. I've actually never been to that because I seemed to always be out of town when they'd have it.

SF: Is there a neighborhood listserv or newsletter?

JS: There is a neighborhood listserv, it's not very active. I would say that the neighborhood association, unless you're on the board, which meets monthly, the rest of the neighborhood association isn't particularly very active. There is a listserv and it was

active but I think they might have moved over to that online thing that's kind of like Facebook called Hey Neighbor, or something like that.

SF: Oh, Nextdoor.

JS: Something like that. I didn't do that. And usually the conversation on it would be, 'There's a bear.' ( ) And then the conversation started really, really picking up with that development that was going to go in and they just kind of got their own list of people, an email list, so that kind of got off the listserv and people were on the email list. I still get emails from them periodically.

SF: Where did you go for recreation? Parks or—. When you were growing up.

JS: That's an interesting question. I personally had a swing set at Gracelyn Road and at Country Club. But at Country Club, that field behind us was, that was the recreation. Now to go swimming--I went to the Jewish Community Center pool, and that was the old Jewish Community Center which was a big old house and then there was a pool next to it. It's at the same location but the facilities have changed. I had friends who went to the Asheville Country Club but my parents couldn't join, even if they wanted to, but they didn't have time to because they worked six days a week. At that time Jews were not allowed to belong to the Asheville Country Club. So some people who were Jewish actually formed a tennis and swim club at the Grove Park Inn. We didn't belong to that. Also there was the Manor. Some people I had grown up with belonged to the Manor pool and went there but I remember just going to the Jewish Community Center which I could take the bus to or as I got to be in the fifth and sixth grade—usually I wouldn't do this by myself, I'd do this with another friend—we would ride bikes over there from Country

Club Road. And also, I went downtown a lot and that was my recreation, was going downtown either after school or on Saturdays and going to Woolworth's and looking at the record section at Woolworth's or stopping by Cosmos, which was really small but was kind of like the 1960s idea of a 1950s Happy Days, where you get burgers and fries and milkshakes and it was always full of high school kids or junior high school and high school kids after school.

SF: Where was it?

JS: It was in that area that is across the street from the George Vanderbilt Hotel or George Vanderbilt Apartments now, that is now chain linked in—well it wasn't in that building but there were later, Jay Shastri had his—.

SF: Flying Frog.

JS: Flying Frog was there and before that, the first really interesting thing that I remember, because it was closed a long time after Cosmos closed, was the restaurant called the Windmill, which this guy from Romania (correction: Bulgaria--JS) named Vasile, and I don't know Vasile's last name, opened and that was in the late seventies.

SF: That was downtown.

JS: The Windmill. Yeah.

SF: Because I remember there was one that I thought Mrs. Shastri ran in the mall.

JS: But I don't think she called it the Windmill.

SF: That's what I thought it was called. Well anyway.

JS: Well maybe it was but it was when they took over that space from Vasile. It had been the Windmill and then she had her own restaurant but it wasn't called the Windmill. I don't remember what it was called. But her restaurant was good but it was different. Hers was Indian and his was really the first European bistro in Asheville. It was tiny but very incredible.

SF: Did you feel safe living in your neighborhood?

JS: Yeah. I always felt safe. Although my mother always made us lock the door pretty much at all times, and except for our garage door entrance to our house, which was the main one we used. We didn't lock that in the daytime, but if I was in the house, I would lock it. If I had gone outside to play, it wasn't locked. Lock the car, lock the house. But yeah, I felt safe.

SF: Did anything bad ever happen in your neighborhood?

JS: Not to my knowledge but you know I wasn't reading the paper. [Laughter]. I don't know.

SF: Do you have any stories that your parent might have told you about the neighborhood?

JS: No. I'm trying to remember. Let's see. I do remember that Rabbi Unger lived really close to us when we lived on Gracelyn. He lived on the street, it starts with an M. It could be Melrose. It runs parallel to Woodlawn (correction: Woodvale--JS). So he lived in a

house, that you drive up Woodlawn (Woodvale--JS) and turn right. It was within walking distance. He liked my brother a lot because he was a good Hebrew student and I think he went over there when he going to have his Bar Mitzvah and had dinner with him. Mrs. Unger invited my brother to dinner a lot. So, there was that. Oh, here's a good story. This is a good story. But it wasn't particularly about our neighborhood, but it happened in our neighborhood. Before I was born, my brother was a little kid, there was a day camp at the Jewish Community Center so this would like 1951 or something like that. Mr. Lally, Joe Lally, who I'm not sure if he was married at that time, but he was a teacher at St. Genevieve's and in the summer I guess he didn't have work and he worked at the Asheville JCC Day Camp. He drove the bus for the Asheville JCC Day Camp and my mom has always loved Mr. Lally because she had to meet the bus one day and say, 'Barry doesn't want to go to day camp,' and Mr. Lally had stopped the bus and he said, 'Well is he sick?' and she said, 'No, I don't think he's sick. He just doesn't want to go. I don't know why. I can't get him to go.' This was her first kid and he was probably about four. Mr. Lally said, 'Let me see him.' So he got off the bus, he came into the house, and he sat on the bed. He said, 'Come on, Barry. Do you want to go to day camp?' 'No, I don't want to go to day camp.' 'We're going to have fun. Come on. I want you to get up.' And he coaxed Barry to get up, get dressed, get on the bus and go to day camp. So, Mr. Lally was always in our book, a good guy. Maybe that's one reason that they sent me to St. Genevieve's. I don't really know.

SF: Do you know if there were any sanatoriums or inns or boarding houses in the neighborhood?

JS: I don't think that there were. Now, if you ask me about my dad's neighborhood, that could be a separate interview. He lived more in town, not right out here. Certainly not to my knowledge as a kid. Even in the things I know about, I don't think that that there were. (Note: Coburn Apartments was about 6 blocks north on Kimberly and it had been a sanitarium at one point.--JS)

SF: It says, describe some of your experiences like during the civil rights movement. They talk about other historic things.

JS: Well.

SF: Did you notice a change then?

JS: Well I remember one thing. We had a lady who worked in our house from the time I was probably seven until twelve. Would it be twelve? Would I be older than that? What year did Robert Kennedy get killed? When Robert Kennedy got killed, she was very upset.. Well actually when President Kennedy got killed, I'm not sure that she knew about him. My mother called her and told her and my mother was crying on the phone and I was home sick that day from school, so I remember my mother being upset on the phone, I remember Van being really upset and then—.

SF: Wait. Who's Van?

JS: Van was the lady who took care of me and was our cook and cleaning person. So that was sixty-three. So Bobby Kennedy was killed in sixty-five, sixty-six, sixty-seven? I don't know. She was still working and when he got killed, that was one day in the afternoon and she was just devastated. So I was kind of young but I knew that something

really bad had happened. I remember, when integration of Asheville High happened. I wasn't there so I know that I had heard that they had marches and they called it a riot. I'm not sure if it was exactly a riot because I wasn't there. I do know, one reason St. Genevieve's closed was that a lot of the nuns were getting out of the order so there were not a whole lot of nuns left, especially younger ones. There were two who were still left and all of the nuns at our school who were not super super old were pretty liberal and there were marches downtown, civil rights marches downtown, and I know that they marched in those because they talked about it. We had, in my grade we had thirty-three people in it, so it was a very small school. Two of those girls in our class were African-American. In the ninth grade we got one and a second one in the tenth grade and they stayed through graduation so I don't know, what was that--almost ten per cent of our class was African-American-- but we had a very small class. [Laughter]. I'm not sure I knew a whole lot about it, but I do know that there was a lot of activity going on around the new YWCA and I did used to go down there a lot. There was this wonderful woman named Phyllis (note: Phyllis Sherrill) who was African-American. She kind of ran things there. She was in charge of everything it seemed like. I don't remember her last name but a lot of people in town would remember her. It seemed like there were talk sessions and programs and stuff. I would have been probably in ninth or tenth grade at that point. I was more active though with—because my friends were really kind of involved with presidential elections, so even before I was old enough to vote, I was working for Eugene McCarthy, I was working against George Wallace. I remember some of my friends spray painted the George Wallace headquarters downtown. Who else ran? After it was McCarthy, it was—I don't remember. But we were pretty active in doing what we could

as young democrats, not officially in a young democrats organization, but high school democrats working to get those guys elected.

SF: Is there anything else that we might not have covered that you'd like to add?

JS: No, I think that we've probably covered it.

SF: Do you know any other people that might be good to interview?

JS: I think you should interview Rick Warner. I don't know exactly how to get hold of him but he's there on Sumner Place and Becky Warner, her last name is I think Saxonhauser, or Saxonhausen or something like that, and she lives on Sumner Place (Note: Becky Warner Sachsenmaier--JS). And I'm thinking of people who I went to Little Beaver with like Laurie McCracken Smith, Laurie Smith, who's married to one of the many Mike Smith's here in town. She went to Little Beaver and Jones School and St. Genevieve's, just like I did. I'm pretty sure where she lived actually wasn't in the city limits. They lived out in Beaverdam, but I think she would have some really interesting stories.

SF: What did you say Becky's name was?

JS: I'm going to have to tell you that after you're not recording because I don't remember exactly what her last name is. You might want to interview Joanna Beck. She grew up in North Asheville and she has really different memories from me because she went to Jones School but she didn't go to Little Beaver, she went to David Millard and she went to Asheville High, which I didn't do. She knew a lot of different people because her family goes back more generations and she's one of the people whose aunts and uncles

had farms out in the county and she worked in youth theatre a lot. I will say, one thing that I forgot to say is that John Haber was from Beaver Lake, from North Asheville and he started Tanglewood, I'm not sure it was called Tanglewood, might have been called Tanglewood at that time, but is actually Asheville Youth Theatre now or vice versa. His first performance that he put on, he was a director and actor, and the first performance was in the North Asheville Community Center, which is the basement of where the library used to be on Larchmont. So Joanna knows a lot about that, that sort of emanated from North Asheville so that's kind of interesting. The other thing about Joanna is that they lived out Beaverdam (Beaverdam Rd in N Asheville--JS), they lived by St. Eugene's Church, and then out in Beaverdam. Her mother worked for so many different restaurants in town. She worked for Buck's for a long time. She worked for the Grove Park Inn. She managed the Terrace Restaurant in the Grove Park Inn. So she's probably got tons of stories and her dad worked downtown.

SF: Okay, great. Well, thanks a lot.

JS: You're welcome. Thanks for the opportunity.

SF: I hope this all worked.

JS: I'm sure it did.

END OF INTERVIEW.